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ABSTRACT

The material in this unit is designed to introduce students to the origin and role of ideas in history, especially their role in the lives of ordinary people, in the rapidly industrializing United States of the 19th century. These lessons concern Americans in the great age of industrialization, from 1850 to 1900. Unit objectives include: (1) identifying common characteristics of the late 19th century success ethic, using examples from biography and literature; (2) describing the social, economic, and political circumstances that nurtured the success ethic; (3) identifying promoters of the gospel of wealth and explaining why they promoted it; and (4) examining the tension between an ethic of individual success and an ideology that justifies the power of the rich. The first of three lesson plans deals with the virtues of frugality. Objectives of this lesson include discussing characteristics of the success ethic and suggesting reasons why it prevailed in early America, and showing the common values of most Americans and their belief that most people could achieve. The second lesson on virtues of wealth helps students to identify the main components of the competing form of the success ethic that developed in the industrial United States, to identify people such as Horatio Alger, who preached the virtues of wealth, and to examine a rags to riches story and evaluate its realistic and unrealistic characteristics. The third lesson on the gospel of wealth presents primary sources from which students can identify the promoters of the gospel of wealth, examine their methods of appealing to ordinary people, and analyze the values implied in an ideology that exalts wealth and the wealthy. (DK)

ED 376 092

THE AMERICAN DREAM AND THE GOSPEL OF WEALTH IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY AMERICAN SOCIETY

A UNIT OF STUDY FOR GRADES 9 - 12

By Nina Gifford
&
Tom Ingersoll

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For information on additional teaching units and other resources from the Center, please write:

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APPROACH AND RATIONALE

By Linda Symcox

The National Center for History in the Schools has developed the following collection of lessons for teaching **The American Dream and the Gospel of Wealth in Nineteenth-Century American Society**. Our units are the fruit of a year-long collaboration between history professors and experienced teachers of both United States and World History. They represent specific "**dramatic moments**" in history from which you and your students can pause to delve into the deeper meanings of selected landmark events and explore their wider context in the great historical narrative.

In our approach, the continuing narrative provides the context in which the dramatic moment is situated. By studying a crucial turning-point in history, the student becomes aware that choices had to be made by real human beings, that those decisions were the result of specific factors, and that they set in motion a series of historical consequences. We have selected dramatic moments that best bring alive that decision-making process. We hope that through this approach, your students will realize that history is an ongoing, open-ended process, and that the decisions they make today create the conditions of tomorrow's history.

Our dramatic moments are based on **primary sources**, taken from documents, artifacts, journals, diaries, newspapers and literature from the period under study. As you know, a primary source is a **first-hand** account of any event in history. For example, the telecast or the script of a speech would be a primary source. A secondary source is a **second-hand** account of an event. This would be, for example, the newspaper account of the speech the next day or a newscaster's report about the speech. All

historical accounts, such as textbooks, are by their very nature secondary sources. What we hope to achieve using primary source documents in these lessons is to remove the distance that students feel from historical events and to connect them more intimately with the past. In this way we hope to re-create for your students a sense of "being there," a sense of seeing history through the eyes of the very people who were making decisions. This will help your students develop historical empathy, to realize that history is not an impersonal process divorced from real people like themselves. At the same time, by analyzing primary sources, students will actually practice the historian's craft, discovering for themselves how to analyze evidence, establish a valid interpretation and construct a coherent narrative in which all the relevant factors play a part.

CONTENT AND ORGANIZATION

Within this unit, you will find: 1) **Teacher Background Materials** and 2) **Lesson Plans** with **Student Resources**. This unit, as we have said above, focuses on certain key moments in time and should be used as a supplement to your customary course materials. We have chosen to pitch the various lessons on different grade levels and they can usually be adapted to a slightly higher or lower level.

The **Teacher Background** section should provide you with a good overview of the entire unit and with the historical information and context necessary to link the specific **Dramatic Moment** to the larger historical narrative. You may consult it for your own use, and you may choose to share it with students if they are of a sufficient grade level to understand the materials.

The **Lesson Plans** include a variety of ideas and ap-

proaches for the teacher which can be elaborated upon or cut as you see the need. These lesson plans contain student resources which accompany each lesson. These resources consist of primary source documents, any handouts or student background materials, and in many cases, a bibliography for the unit.

In our series of teaching units, each collection can be taught in several ways. You can teach all of the lessons offered on any given topic, or you can select and adapt the ones that best support your particular course needs. We have not attempted to be comprehensive or prescriptive in our offerings, but rather to give you an array of enticing possibilities for in-depth study, at varying grade levels. We hope that you will find the lesson plans exciting and stimulating for your classes. We also hope that your students will never again see history as a boring sweep of inevitable facts and meaningless dates but rather as an endless treasure of real life stories, and an exercise in analysis and reconstruction, rather than rote memorization.

A DRAMATIC MOMENT

"FROM RAGS TO RICHES"

At the child's scream, the father looked up, and, with a cry of horror, sprang to the edge of the boat. He would have plunged in, but, being unable to swim, would only have endangered his own life, without being able to save his child.

"My child!" he exclaimed in anguish,—"who will save my child? A thousand—ten thousand dollars to any one who will save him!"...

Now Dick was an expert swimmer. It was an accomplishment which he had possessed for years, and he no sooner saw the boy fall than he resolved to rescue him. His determination was formed before he heard the liberal offer made by the boy's father. Indeed, I must do Dick the justice to say that, in the excitement of the moment, he did not hear it at all....

This excerpt was reprinted as published in *Ragged Dick and Mark, The Match Boy*, by Horatio Alger (New York: Macmillan Publishing company/collier books, 1962). Photo courtesy of The Bettmann Archives.

TEACHER BACKGROUND MATERIALS

I. UNIT OVERVIEW AND RATIONALE

The American Dream is to achieve economic independence, especially to have a vocation and own a home. The "way to wealth" was outlined in its classic form by Benjamin Franklin and continues to inspire Americans. But the development of industrial society in the nineteenth century led to a competing idea: a "gospel of wealth" that exalted money-making and was used to justify the unprecedented economic power of the captains of industry. Allied with this gospel was the rags-to-riches saga, which featured rising meteorically to the top in contrast to Franklin's lifelong prescription for industry and frugality. The tension between the limited goal for the average person and the chance of fabulous wealth possible only for a few helps explain why Americans became deeply divided about the great concentrations of wealth and the power of big business in what Mark Twain called "the gilded age."

The material in this unit is designed to introduce students to the origin and role of ideas in history, especially their role in the lives of ordinary people, in the rapidly industrializing United States of the nineteenth century.

II. UNIT CONTEXT

These lessons concern Americans in the great age of industrialization, from 1850 to 1900. A good time to introduce the material is after covering immigration, the growth and problems of the working class, rise of the labor movement, and the appearance of big business. Having studied real-life cases where the rags to riches myth seems to have been borne out (such as Rockefeller and Carnegie), and others where it seems to have been a cruel joke (the thousands living in tenements), students will be prepared to examine industrial development and

will have background for the study of Populism and Progressivism.

III. UNIT OBJECTIVES

1. To identify common characteristics of the late nineteenth-century success ethic, using examples from biography and literature.

2. To describe the social, economic, and political circumstances that nurtured the success ethic.

3. To identify promoters of the gospel of wealth and explain why they promoted it.

4. To examine the tension between an ethic of individual success and an ideology that justifies the power of the rich.

IV. INTRODUCTION TO THE AMERICAN DREAM AND THE GOSPEL OF WEALTH IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY AMERICAN SOCIETY

Throughout America's long preindustrial history, when agriculture was the source of livelihood for most people, the values expressed by Benjamin Franklin were prevalent. Yet Franklin's way to wealth was as obvious as the road to the market for his readers: use your time wisely, conserve your income, impress creditors with regular habits, and avoid expensive vices. In this simpler age of agriculture and commercial capitalism, although there were rich individuals in America, there were no factories in the cities and no captains of industry with great power. Moreover, Americans like Thomas Jefferson, who knew about conditions in European cities, hoped Americans would not create cities and the dependent classes that inhabited them. They viewed industrial workers without their own land and tools of their trade as subject to their employers and unable to behave as independent citizens in a democracy.

The majority of Americans continued to work and live on farms throughout the nineteenth century, but by 1870 over one fourth lived in towns or cities, and by 1900 that portion reached 40 percent. This increase was mainly the result of migration from rural America and immigration from rural Europe by people who took the jobs in the new factories. As industries became consolidated into larger and more complex forms, the decisions of a single man or the mysterious play of market forces could alter the condition of thousands of working families. Many of these people lived from day to day, owned no property, and had little or no recourse against the cheapening of their labor except to organize. Bloody battles broke out between unions and the hired forces of employers who would deny workers any bargaining power.

The employers were guided by the philosophy of Social Darwinism, the idea that progress results from a tooth-and-nail struggle for the survival of the fittest. This idea was not implied in Darwin's theory of evolution, but industrialists used it to rationalize practices of big business that many thought denied the rights of workers. Thus, businessmen also encouraged the myth that anyone could rise from rags to riches, which ignored people trapped in poverty. As an ideology, Social Darwinism also served to sanctify wealth as a sign of special fitness or even of salvation, as implied by some church ministers.

V. LESSON PLANS

1. The Virtues of Frugality

2. The Virtues of Wealth

3. The Gospel of Wealth

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LESSON ONE

THE VIRTUES OF FRUGALITY

A. Objectives (One Day)

1. To discuss characteristics of the success ethic and suggest reasons why it prevailed in early America.

2. To show the common values of most Americans and to show their belief that most people could achieve.

B. Lesson Activities:

1. Divide students into small groups and have them go over Franklin's maxims from *Poor Richard's Almanac* (**DOCUMENT A**). Ask them to take a few minutes to create their own maxims to add to Franklin's list. In the process of producing their own lists they should notice the ways society indicates values by identifying where they have learned the wisdom in the maxims they write.

2. Have students share their lists with the whole group, and lead a discussion. Have them evaluate each other's maxims: would Franklin have found them acceptable? Ask them how society tries to enforce certain values. (Be prepared for this discussion to become dominated by television). Why is the goal of success important? Should nonconformists be allowed to have different goals?

3. Have students read Franklin's letter to a friend (**DOCUMENT B**). Do they notice any differences between Franklin's tone in this letter and the maxims of Poor Richard? Is the emphasis still on industry and frugality?

4. Have the students read-around **Part I** of Irvin Wyllie's *The Self-Made Man* **(DOCUMENT C)** to introduce them to the century that followed Franklin's death in 1790. They should read critically. What, for example, does the author mean by suggesting that young men were more inspired by economic opportunity than by Franklin in the nineteenth century? (Wyllie refers only to those young men who became millionaires in big cities.)

5. Ask students to make a checklist of facts they know about the industrial revolution and volunteer them so that everyone can work with the same list. Remind them of the growth of consumer demand and advertising. Remind them of the rising expectations of everyone during the nineteenth century for certain amenities like indoor plumbing.

6. **Homework Assignment:**

Have students read the excerpt from Horatio Alger's *Ragged Dick* **(DOCUMENT D)**. Alternatively, have students read this in class as part of **LESSON 2**.

C. Evaluating the Lesson

Check for understanding during discussion. Some students will have difficulty understanding the difference between an ethic (a moral route to success), values (the worth accorded to a condition, goal, or possession), and, if you choose to introduce the concept later in the lesson, an ideology (a system of doctrines held by an individual or class of people). You may wish to make the last exercise a formal writing assignment.

STUDENT RESOURCE: DOCUMENT A

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN,
POOR RICHARD'S ALMANACK, 1732-1757
(Primary Source)

Industry, Perseverance, and Frugality make Fortune yield.

Tomorrow I'll reform, the fool does say;
Today itself's too late, the wise did yesterday.

Neither trust, nor contend, nor lay wagers, nor lend,
and you'll have peace to your life's end.

At the working man's house hunger looks in, but dares not enter.

He that riseth late, must trot all day,
and shall scarce overtake his business at night.

Glass, china, and reputation are easily cracked, and never well mended.

Proportion your charity to the strength of your estate,
or God will proportion your estate to the weakness of your charity.

The second vice is lying; the first is running in debt.

Don't judge of men's wealth or piety by their Sunday appearances.

The sleeping fox catches no poultry. Up! Up!

God helps them that helps themselves.

Beware of little expenses: a small leak will sink a great ship.

A light purse is a heavy curse.

Early to bed and early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise.

Be always ashamed to catch thyself idle.

Lost time is never found again.

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BENJAMIN FRANKLIN'S LETTER TO "MY FRIEND, A.B.", JULY 21, 1748 (Primary Source)

Remember that TIME is Money. He that can earn Ten Shillings a Day by his Labour, and goes abroad, or sits idle one half of that Day, tho' he spends but Sixpence during his Diversion or Idleness, ought not to reckon That the only Expence; he has really spent or rather thrown away Five Shillings besides.

Remember that CREDIT is Money. If a Man lets his Money lie in my Hands after it is due, he gives me the Interest, or so much as I can make of it during that Time. This amounts to a considerable Sum where a Man has good and large Credit, and makes good Use of it.

Remember that Money is of a prolific generating Nature. Money can beget Money, and its Offspring can beget more, and so on. Five Shillings turn'd, is Six: Turn'd again, 'tis Seven and Three Pence; and so on 'til it becomes an Hundred Pound. The more there is of it, the more it produces every Turning, so that the Profits rise quicker and quicker. He that kills a breeding Sow, destroys all her Offspring to the thousandth Generation. He that murders a Crown, destroys all it might have produc'd, even Scores of Pounds.

Remember that Six Pounds a Year is but a Groat a Day. For this little Sum (which may be daily wasted either in Time or Expence unperceiv'd) a Man of Credit may on his own Security have the constant Possession and Use of an Hundred Pounds. So much in Stock briskly turn'd by an industrious man, produces great Advantage.

Remember this Saying, That the good Paymaster is Lord of another Man's Purse. He that is known to pay punctually and exactly to the Time he promises, may at any Time, and on any Occasion, raise all the Money his Friends can spare. This is sometimes of great Use: Therefore never keep borrow'd Money an Hour beyond the Time you promis'd, lest a Disappointment shuts up your Friends Purse forever.

The most triffling Actions that affect a Man's Credit, are to be regarded. The Sound of your Hammer at Five in the Morning or Nine at Night, heard by a

STUDENT RESOURCE: DOCUMENT B

Creditor, makes him easy Six Months longer. But if he sees you at a Billiard Table, or hears your Voice in a Tavern, when you should be at Work, he sends for his Money the next Day. Finer Cloaths than he or his Wife wears, or greater Expence in any particular than he affords himself, shocks his Pride, and he duns you to humble you. Creditors are a kind of People, that have the sharpest Eyes and Ears, as well as the best Memories of any in the World.

Good-natur'd Creditors (and such one would always chuse to deal with if one could) feel Pain when they are oblig'd to ask for Money. Spare 'em that Pain, and they will love you. When you receive a sum of Money, divide it among 'em in Proportion to your Debts. Don't be asham'd of paying a small Sum because you owe a greater. Money, more or less, is always welcome; and your Creditor had rather be at the Trouble of receiving Ten Pounds voluntarily brought him, tho' at ten different Times of Payments, than be oblig'd to go ten Times to demand it before he can receive it in a Lump. It shews, besides, that you are mindful of what you owe; it makes you appear a careful as well as an honest Man; and that still encreases your Credit.

Beware of thinking all your own that you possess, and of living accordingly. 'Tis a Mistake that many People who have Credit fall into. To prevent this, keep an exact Account for some Time of both your Expences and your Incomes. If you take the Pains at first to mention Particulars, it will have this good Effect; you will discover how wonderfully small trifling Expences mount up to large Sums, and will discern what might have been, and may for the future be saved, without occasioning any great Inconvenience.

In short, the Way to Wealth, if you desire it, is as plain as the Way to Market. It depends chiefly on two Words, INDUSTRY and FRUGALITY: i.e. Waste neither Time nor Money, but make the best Use of both. He that gets all he can honestly, and saves all he gets (necessary Expences excepted) will certainly become RICH: If that Being who governs the World, to whom all should look for a Blessing on their honest Endeavors, doth not in his wise Providence otherwise determine.

From *The Autobiography and Other Writings*, Ed. L. Jesse Lemisch. New York & Toronto: The New American Library, 1961.

STUDENT RESOURCE: DOCUMENT C

"THE MYTH OF RAGS TO RICHES," PART I
(Secondary Source)

It was no accident that the best-known colonial self-made man was Benjamin Franklin, a product of Puritan Boston. At a tender age he read Cotton Mather's *Essays To Do Good*, later crediting them with having had a profound and lifelong influence on his thought and conduct. He also received advice from his father, a humble Puritan candlemaker, who drummed into his head the meaning of the ancient proverb: "Seest thou a man diligent in his business? He shall stand before kings." Fortified by these principles of self-help Franklin migrated to Philadelphia, the Quaker commercial metropolis, to begin his rise in the printing trade. The story of his upward climb has always enjoyed a prominent place in the folklore of success. Through *Poor Richard's Almanack* (1732-1757) he publicized prosperity maxims which have probably exerted as much practical influence on Americans as the combined teachings of all the formal philosophers. Certainly in the nineteenth century the alleged virtues of the American people closely resembled the alleged virtues of Poor Richard.

During the American Revolution Franklin's energies were diverted into other channels, and it was the third decade of the nineteenth century before his self-help themes were revived by a new generation of success propagandists....By 1830, however, the impacts of the Industrial Revolution could no longer be ignored; in the great cities of the North and East, journalists, clergymen, lawyers and other spokesmen began to lay the foundations for the powerful nineteenth-century cult of the self-made man....

Important though Franklin was as a symbol and inspiration, the magnificent economic opportunities of nineteenth-century America constituted a far more important inspiration to young men in quest of wealth. The urge to get ahead was especially strong in areas which had been transformed by the Industrial Revolution; it was no accident that three out of every four nineteenth-century millionaires were natives of New England, New York, or Pennsylvania, and that 70 percent won their fortune in either manufacturing, banking, trade, or transportation. Such activities were concentrated in the cities, in old commercial centers like New York, Philadelphia, and Boston, or in new industrial towns such as Lawrence, Lowell, Rochester, and Pittsburgh, cities which held the key to fortune for the ambitious poor....

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HORATIO ALGER, RAGGED DICK, OR STREET LIFE IN NEW YORK, 1868

(Novel)

"WAKE UP there, youngster," said a rough voice. Ragged Dick opened his eyes slowly, and stared stupidly in the face of the speaker, but did not offer to get up.

"Wake up, you young vagabond!" said the man, a little impatiently; "I suppose you'd lay there all day, if I hadn't called you."

"What time is it?" asked Dick.

"Seven o'clock."

"Seven o'clock! I oughter 've been up an hour ago. I know what 'twas made me so precious sleepy. I went to the Old Bowery last night, and didn't turn in till past twelve."

"You went to the Old Bowery? Where'd you get your money?" asked the man, who was a porter in the employ of a firm doing business on Spruce Street.

"Made it by shines, in course. My guardian don't allow me no money for theatres, so I have to earn it."

"Some boys get it easier than that," said the porter significantly.

"You don't catch me stealin', if that's what you mean," said Dick.

"Don't you ever steal, then?"

"No, and I wouldn't. Lots of boys does it, but I wouldn't."

"Well, I'm glad to hear you say that. I believe there's some good in you, Dick, after all."

"Oh, I'm a rough customer!" said Dick. "But I wouldn't steal. It's mean."

"I'm glad you think so, Dick," and the rough voice sounded gentler than at first. "Have you got any money to buy your breakfast?"

"No, but I'll soon get some."

While this conversation had been going on, Dick

had got up. His bedchamber had been a wooden box half full of straw, on which the young bootblack had reposed his weary limbs, and slept as soundly as if it had been a bed of down. He dumped down into the straw without taking the trouble of undressing. Getting up too was an equally short process. He jumped out of the box, shook himself, picked out one or two straws that had found their way into the rents of his clothes, and, drawing a well-worn cap over his uncombed locks, he was all ready for the business of the day.

Dick's appearance as he stood beside the box was rather peculiar. His pants were torn in several places, and had apparently belonged in the first instance to a boy two sizes larger than himself. He wore a vest, all the buttons of which were gone except two, out of which peeped a shirt which looked as if it had been worn a month. To complete his costume he wore a coat too long for him, dating back, if one might judge from its general appearance, to a remote antiquity.

Washing the face and hands is usually considered proper in commencing the day, but Dick was above such refinement. He had no particular dislike to dirt, and did not think it necessary to remove several dark streaks on his face and hands. But in spite of his dirt and rags there was something about Dick that was attractive. It was easy to see that if he had been clean and well dressed he would have been decidedly good-looking. Some of his companions were sly, and their faces inspired distrust; but Dick had a frank, straight-forward manner that made him a favorite.

Dick's business hours had commenced. He had no office to open. His little blacking-box was ready for use, and he looked sharply in the faces of all who passed, addressing each with, "Shine yer boots, sir?"

"How much?" asked a gentleman on his way to his office.

"Ten cents," said Dick, dropping his box, and sink-

ing upon his knees on the sidewalk, flourishing his brush with the air of one skilled in his profession.

"Ten cents! Isn't that a little steep?"

"Well, you know 'taint all clear profit," said Dick, who had already set to work. "There's the *blacking* costs something, and I have to get a new brush pretty often."

"And you have a large rent too," said the gentleman quizzically, with a glance at a large hole in Dick's coat.

"Yes, sir," said Dick, always ready to joke; "I have to pay such a big rent for my manshun up on Fifth Avenoo, that I can't afford to take less than ten cents a shine. I'll give you a bully shine, sir."

"Be quick about it, for I am in a hurry. So your house is on Fifth Avenue, is it?"

"It isn't anywhere else," said Dick, and Dick spoke the truth there.

"What tailor do you patronize?" asked the gentleman, surveying Dick's attire.

"Would you like to go to the same one?" asked Dick, shrewdly.

"Well, no; it strikes me that he didn't give you a very good fit."

"This coat once belonged to General Washington," said Dick comically. "He wore it all through the Revolution, and it got torn some, 'cause he fit so hard. When he died he told his widder to give it to some smart young feller that hadn't got none of his own; so she gave it to me. But if you'd like it, sir, to remember General Washington by, I'll let you have it reasonable."

"Thank you, but I wouldn't want to deprive you of it. And did your pants come from General Washington too?"

"No, they was a gift from Lewis Napoleon. Lewis had outgrown 'em and sent 'em to me,—he's bigger than me, and that's why they don't fit."

"It seems you have distinguished friends. Now,

my lad, I suppose you would like your money."

"I shouldn't have any objection," said Dick.

"I believe," said the gentleman, examining his pocket-book, "I haven't got anything short of twenty-five cents. Have you got any change?"

"Not a cent," said Dick. "All my money's invested in the Erie Railroad."

"That's unfortunate."

"Shall I get the money changed, sir?"

"I can't wait; I've got to meet an appointment immediately. I'll hand you twenty-five cents, and you can leave the change at my office any time during the day."

"All right, sir. Where is it?"

"No. 125 Fulton Street. Shall you remember?"

"Yes, sir. What name?"

"Greyson,—office on second floor."

"All right, sir; I'll bring it."

"I wonder whether the little scamp will prove honest," said Mr. Greyson to himself, as he walked away. "If he does, I'll give him my custom regularly. If he don't, as is most likely, I shan't mind the loss of fifteen cents."

Mr. Greyson didn't understand Dick. Our ragged hero wasn't a model boy in all respects. I am afraid he swore sometimes, and now and then he played tricks upon unsophisticated boys from the country or gave a wrong direction to honest old gentlemen unused to the city....

Another of Dick's faults was his extravagance. Being always wide-awake and ready for business, he earned enough to have supported him comfortably and respectably. There were not a few young clerks who employed Dick from time to time in his professional capacity, who scarcely earned as much as he, greatly as their style and dress exceeded his. Dick was careless of his earnings. Where they went he could hardly have told himself. However much he managed to earn during the

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day, all was generally spent before morning. He was fond of going to the Old Bowery Theatre, and to Tony Pastor's, and if he had any money left afterwards, he would invite some of his friends in somewhere to have an oyster stew; so it seldom happened that he commenced the day with a penny.

Then I am sorry to add that Dick had formed the habit of smoking. This cost him considerable, for Dick was rather fastidious about his cigars, and wouldn't smoke the cheapest. Besides, having a liberal nature, he was generally ready to treat his companions....

There was another way in which Dick sometimes lost money. There was a noted gambling-house on Baxter Street, which in the evening was sometimes crowded with these juvenile gamesters, who staked their hard earnings, generally losing of course, and refreshing themselves from time to time with a vile mixture of liquor at two cents a glass. Sometimes Dick strayed in here, and played with the rest.

I have mentioned Dick's faults and defects, because I want it understood, to begin with, that I don't consider him a model boy. But there were some good points about him nevertheless. He was above doing anything mean or dishonorable. He would not steal, or cheat, or impose upon younger boys, but was frank and straight-forward, manly and self-reliant. His nature was a noble one, and had saved him from all mean faults. I hope my young readers will like him as I do, without being blind to his faults. Perhaps, although he was only a bootblack, they may find something in him to imitate....

...Dick shouldered his box and walked up as far as the Astor House. He took his station on the sidewalk, and began to look about him.

Just behind him were two persons,—one, a gentleman of fifty; the other, a boy of thirteen or fourteen. They were speaking together, and Dick had no difficulty in hearing what was said.

"I am sorry, Frank, that I can't go about, and show you some of the sights of New York, but I shall be full of business to-day. It is your first visit to the city too."

"Yes, sir."

"There's a good deal worth seeing here. But I'm afraid you'll have to wait till next time. You can go out and walk by yourself, but don't venture too far, or you may get lost."

"Oh, never mind, uncle, I shall be amused in walking around, and looking at the shop-windows. There will be a great deal to see."

Now Dick had listened to all this conversation. Being an enterprising young man, he thought he saw a chance for a speculation, and determined to avail himself of it.

Accordingly he stepped up to the two just as Frank's uncle was about leaving, and said, "I know all about the city, sir; I'll show him around, if you want me to."

The gentleman looked a little curiously at the ragged figure before him.

"So you are a city boy, are you?"

"Yes, sir," said Dick, "I've lived here ever since I was a baby."

"And you know all about the public buildings, I suppose?"

"They didn't have no wash-bowls at the hotel where I stopped," said Dick.

"What hotel did you stop at?"

"The Box Hotel."

"The Box Hotel?"

"Yes, sir, I slept in a box on Spruce Street."

Frank surveyed Dick curiously.

"How did you like it?" he asked.

"I slept bully."

"Suppose it had rained?"

"Then I'd have wet my best clothes," said Dick.

"Are these all the clothes you have?"

"Yes sir."

Mr. Whitney spoke a few words to Frank, who seemed pleased with the suggestion.

"Follow me, my lad," he said.

Dick in some surprise obeyed orders, following Mr. Whitney and Frank into the hotel, past the office, to the foot of the staircase. Here a servant of the hotel stopped Dick, but Mr. Whitney explained that he had something for him to do, and he was allowed to proceed.

They entered a long entry, and finally paused before a door. This being opened a pleasant chamber was disclosed.

"Come in, my lad," said Mr. Whitney.

Dick and Frank entered.

"Now," said Mr. Whitney to Dick, "my nephew here is on his way to a boarding-school. He had a suit of clothes in his trunk about half worn. He is willing to give them to you. I think they will look better than those you have on."

Dick was so astonished that he hardly knew what to say. Presents were something that he knew very little about, never having received any to his knowledge. That so large a gift should be made to him by a stranger seemed very wonderful.

The clothes were brought out, and turned out to be a neat gray suit.

"Before you put them on, my lad, you must wash yourself. Clean clothes and a dirty skin don't go very well together. Frank, you may attend to him. I am obliged to go at once. Have you got as much money as you require?"

"Yes, uncle."

"One more work, my lad," said Mr. Whitney, addressing Dick; "I may be rash in trusting a boy of whom I know nothing, but I like your looks, and I think you will prove a proper guide for my nephew."

"Yes, I will, sir," said Dick, earnestly. "Honor

bright!"

"Very well. A pleasant time to you."...

...As the boys pursued their way up Broadway, Dick pointed out the prominent hotels and places of amusement....

Directly opposite Cooper Institute, Frank saw a very large building of brick, covering about an acre of ground.

"Is that a hotel?" he asked.

"No," said Dick; "that's the Bible House. It's the place where they make Bibles. I was in there once,—saw a big pile of 'em."

"Did you ever read the Bible?" asked Frank, who had some idea of the neglected state of Dick's education.

"No," said Dick; "I've heard it's a good book, but I never read one. I aint much on readin'. It makes my head ache."

"I suppose you can't read very fast."

" I can read the little words pretty well, but the big ones is what stick me."

"If I lived in the city, you might come every evening to me, and I would teach you."

"Would you take so much trouble about me?" asked Dick, earnestly.

"Certainly; I should like to see you getting on. There isn't much chance of that if you don't know how to read and write."

"You're a good feller," said Dick, gratefully. "I wish you did live in New York. I'd like to know somethin'. Whereabouts do you live?"

"About fifty miles off, in a town on the left bank of the Hudson. I wish you'd come up and see me sometime. I would like to have you come and stop two or three days."

"Honor bright?"

"I don't understand."

"Do you mean it?" asked Dick, incredulously.

"Of course I do. Why shouldn't I?"

"What would your folks say if they knowed you asked a boot-black to visit you?"

"You are none the worse for being a boot-black, Dick."

"I aint used to genteel society," said Dick. "I shouldn't know how to behave.

"Then I could show you. You won't be a boot-black all your life, you know."

"No," said Dick...."I really wish I could get some thin else to do."....

..."Have you always lived in New York, Dick?" asked Frank, after a pause.

"Ever since I can remember."

"I wish you'd tell me a little about yourself. Have you got any father or mother?"

"I aint got no mother. She died when I wasn't but three years old. My father went to sea; but he went off before mother died, and nothin' was ever heard of him. I expect he got wrecked, or died at sea."

"And what became of you when your mother died?"

"The folks she boarded with took care of me, but they was poor, and they couldn't do much. When I was seven the woman died, and her husband went out West, and then I had to scratch for myself."

"At seven years old!" exclaimed Frank, in amazement.

"Yes," said Dick, "I was a little feller to take care of myself, but," he continued with pardonable pride, "I did it."

"What could you do?"

"....I went into the match business," said Dick; "but it was small sales and small profits. Most of the people I called on had just laid in a stock, and didn't want to buy. So one cold night, when I hadn't money enough to pay for a lodgin', I burned the last of my matches to keep me from freezin'. But it cost too much to get warm that way, and

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I couldn't keep it up."

"You've seen hard times, Dick," said Frank, compassionately.

"Yes," said Dick, "I've knowed what it was to be hungry and cold, with nothin' to eat or to warm me; but there's one thing I never could do," he added, proudly.

"What's that?"

"I never stole," said Dick. "It's mean and I wouldn't do it."

"Were you ever tempted to?"

"Lots of times. Once I had been goin round all day, and hadn't sold any matches, except three cents' worth early in the mornin'. With that I bought an apple, thinkin' I should get some more bimeby. When evenin' come I was awful hungry. I went into a baker's just to look at the bread. It made me feel kind o' good just to look at the bread and cakes, and I thought maybe they would give me some. I asked 'em wouldn't they give me a loaf, and take they pay in matches. But they said they'd got enough matches to last three months; so there wasn't any chance for a trade. While I was standin' at the stove warmin' me, the baker went into the back room, and I felt so hungry I thought I would take just one loaf, and go off with it. There was such a big pile I don't think he'd have known it."

"But you didn't do it?"

"No, I didn't, and I was glad of it, for when the man came in ag'in, he said he wanted some one to carry some cake to a lady in St. Mark's Place. His boy was sick, and he hadn't no one to send; so he told me he'd give me ten cents if I would go. My business wasn't very pressin' just then, so I went, and when I come back, I took my pay in bread and cakes. Didn't they taste good, though?"...

..."Now," said Frank, "I think I'll go back to the Astor House. Uncle has probably got through his business and returned...."

..."So this is Dick," said Mr. Whitney, surveying

him with a smile. "Upon my word, I should hardly have known him. I must congratulate him on his improved appearance."

"Frank's been very kind to me," said Dick, who, rough street-boy as he was, had a heart easily touched by kindness, of which he had never experienced much. "He's a tip-top fellow."

"I believe he is a good boy," said Mr. Whitney. "I hope, my lad, you will prosper and rise in the world. You know in this free country poverty in early life is no bar to a man's advancement. I haven't risen very high myself," he added, with a smile, "but have met with moderate success in life; yet there was a time when I was as poor as you."

"Were you, sir?" asked Dick, eagerly.

"Yes, my boy, I have known the time when I have been obliged to go without my dinner because I didn't have enough money to pay for it."

"How did you get up in the world?" asked Dick, anxiously.

"I entered a printing-office as an apprentice, and worked for some years. Then my eyes gave out and I was obliged to give that up. Not knowing what else to do, I went into the country, and worked on a farm. After a while I was lucky enough to invent a machine, which has brought me in a great deal of money. But there was one thing I got while I was in the printing-office which I value more than money."

"What was that, sir?"

"A taste for reading and study. During my leisure hours I improved myself by study, and acquired a large part of the knowledge which I now possess. Indeed, it was one of my books that first put me on the track of the invention, which I afterwards made. So you see, my lad, that my studious habits paid me in money, as well as in another way."

"I'm awful ignorant," said Dick, soberly.

"But you are young, and, I judge, a smart boy. If you try to learn, you can, and if you ever expect to do anything in the world, you must know something of books."

"I will," said Dick, resolutely. "I aint always goin' to black boots for a livin'."

"All labor is respectable, my lad, and you have no cause to be ashamed of any honest business; yet when you can get something to do that promises better for your future prospects, I advise you to do so. Till then earn your living in the way you are accustomed to, avoid extravagance, and save up a little money if you can."

"Thank you for your advice," said our hero. "There aint many that takes an interest in Ragged Dick...."

"Good-by, my lad," said Mr. Whitney. "I hope to hear good accounts of you sometime. Don't forget what I have told you. Remember that your future position depends mainly upon yourself, and that it will be high or low as you choose to make it."

He held out his hand, in which was a five-dollar bill. Dick shrunk back.

"I don't like to take it," he said. "I haven't earned it."

"Perhaps not," said Mr. Whitney; "but I give it to you because I remember my own friendless youth. I hope it may be of service to you. Sometime when you are a prosperous man, you can repay it in the form of aid to some poor boy, who is struggling upward as you are now."

"I will, sir," said Dick, manfully.

He no longer refused the money, but took it gratefully, and, bidding Frank and uncle good-by, went out into the street....

Two questions now arose: How should he spend e evening, and where should he pass the night? Yesterday with such a sum of money in his possession, he would have answered both questions rapidly. For the

evening, he would have passed it at the Old Bowery, and gone to sleep in any out-of-the-way place that offered. But he had turned over a new leaf, or resolved to do so. He meant to save his money for some useful purpose,—to aid his advancement in the world. He could not afford the threatre. Besides, with his new clothes, he was unwilling to pass the night out of doors.

"I should spoil 'em," he thought, "and that wouldn't pay."

So he determined to hunt up a room which he could occupy regularly, and consider as his own, where he could sleep nights, instead of depending on boxes and old wagons for a change shelter. This would be the first step towards respectability, and Dick was determined to take it....

In the course of the next morning, in pursuance of his new resolutions for the future, he called at a savings bank, and held out four dollars in bills besides another dollar in change.

Our hero took his bank-book, and gazed on the entry "Five Dollars" with a new sense of importance. He had been accustomed to joke about Erie shares; but now, for the first time, he felt himself a capitalist; on a small scale, to be sure, but still it was no small thing for Dick to have five dollars which he could call his own. He firmly determined that he would lay by every cent he could spare from his earnings towards the fund he hoped to accumulate.

But Dick was too sensible not to know that there was something more than money needed to win a respectable position in the world. He felt that he was very ignorant. Of reading and writing he only knew the rudiments, and that, with a slight acquaintance with arithmetic, was all he did know of books. Dick knew he must study hard, and he dreaded it. He looked upon learning as attended with greater difficulties than it really possesses. But Dick had good pluck. He meant to

learn, nevertheless, and resolved to buy a book with his first spare earnings....

At six o'clock Dick went into a restaurant on Chatham Street, and got a comfortable supper. He had been so successful during that day that, after paying for his, he still had ninety cents left. While he was despatching his supper, another boy came in, smaller and slighter than Dick, and sat down beside him. Dick recognized him as a boy who three months before had entered the ranks of the boot-blacks, but who, from a natural timidity, had not been able to earn much.

"How are you, Fosdick?" said Dick, as the other seated himself.

"Pretty well," said Fosdick. "I suppose you're all right."

"Oh, yes, I'm right side up with care. I've been havin' a bully supper. What are you goin' to have?"

"Some bread and butter."

"Why don't you get a cup o' coffee?"

"Why, said Fosdick, reluctantly, "I haven't got money enough tonight."

"Never mind," said Dick; "I'm in luck to-day. I'll stand treat.... Where are you going to sleep to-night, Fosdick?...."

"I don't know," said Fosdick, a little sadly. "In some door-way, I expect. But I'm afraid the police will find me out, ane make me move on."

"I'll tell you what;" said Dick, "you must go home with me.... Then I'll tell you what,...I'll make a bargain with you. I can't read much more'n a pig; and my writin' looks like hens' tracks. I don't want to grow up knowin' no more'n a four-year-old boy. If you'll teach me readin; and writin; evenin's, you shall sleep in my room every night. That'll be better'n door-steps or old boxes...."

A few days later, as Dick was looking about for customers in the neighborhood of the Park, his attention was drawn to a fellow boot-black, a boy about a year

younger than himself, who appeared to have been crying.

"What's the matter, Tom?" asked Dick. "Haven't you had luck to-day?"

"Pretty good," said the boy; "but we're havin' hard times at home. Mother fell last week and broke her arm, and to-morrow we've got to pay the rent, and if we don't the landlord says he'll turn us out."

"Haven't you got anything except what you earn?" asked Dick.

"No," said Tom, "not now. Mother used to earn three or four dollars a week; but she can't do nothin' now, and my little sister and brother are too young."

"I'm sorry for you, Tom" he said. "How much do you owe for rent?"

"Two weeks now," said Tom.

"How much is it a week?"

"Two dollar a week—that makes four."

"Have you got anything towards it?"

"No; I've had to spend all my money for food for mother and the rest of us. I've had pretty hard work to do that. I don't know what we'll do.

"I'll tell you what, Tom," said Dick, impulsively, "I'll stand your friend."

"Have you got any money?" asked Tom, doubtfully.

"Got any money!" repeated Dick. "Don't you know that I run a bank on my own account? How much is it you need?"

"Four dollars," said Tom. "If we don't pay that before to-morrow night, out we go. You haven't got as much as that, have you?"

"Here are three dollars," said Dick, drawing out his pocket-book. "I'll let you have the rest to-morrow, and maybe a little more."...

...Dick now began to look about for a position in a store or counting-room....

Just now, however, business was very dull, and merchants, instead of hiring new assistants, were disposed to part with those already in their employ. After making several ineffectual applications, Dick began to think he should be obliged to stick to his profession until the next season. But about this time something accurred which considerably improved his chances of preferment.

This is the way it happened.

As Dick, with a balance of more than a hundred dollars in the savings bank, might fairly consider himself a young man of property, he thought himself justified in occasionally taking a half holiday from business, and going on an excursion. On Wednesday afternoon Henry Fosdick was sent by his employer on an errand to that part of Brooklyn near Greenwood Cemetery. Dick hastily dressed himself in his best, and determined to accompany him.

The two boys walked down to the South Ferry, and, paying their two cents each, entered the ferry-boat. They remained at the stern, and stood by the railing, watching the great city, with its crowded wharves, receding from view. Beside them was a gentleman with two children,—a girl of eight and a little boy of six. The children were talking gayly to their father. While he was pointing out some object of interest to the little girl, the boy managed to creep, unobserved, beneath the chain that extends across the boat, for the protection of passengers, and, stepping incautiously to the edge of the boat, fell over into the foaming water.

At the child's scream, the father looked up, and, with a cry of horror, sprang to the edge of the boat. He would have plunged in, but, being unable to swim, would only have endangered his own life, without being able to save his child.

"My child!" he exclaimed in anguish,—"who will save my child? A thousand—ten thousand dollars to any one who will save him!"

There chanced to be but few passengers on board at the time, and nearly all these were either in the cabins or standing forward. Among the few who saw the child fall was our hero.

Now Dick was an expert swimmer. It was an accomplishment which he had possessed for years, and he no sooner saw the boy fall then he resolved to rescue him. His determination was formed before he heard the liberal offer made by the boy's father. Indeed, I must do Dick the justice to say that, in the excitement of the moment, he did not hear it at all...

Little Johnny had already risen once, and gone under for the second time, when our hero plunged in. He was obliged to strike out for the boy, and this took time. He reached him none too soon. Just as he was sinking for the third and last time, he caught him by the jacket. Dick was stout and strong, but Johnny clung to him so tightly, that it was with great difficulty he was able to sustain himself.

"Put your arms round my neck," said Dick.

The little boy mechanically obeyed, and clung with a grasp strengthened by his terror. In this position Dick could bear his weight better. But the ferry-boat was receding fast. It was quite impossible to reach it. The father, his face pale with terror and anguish, and his hands clasped in suspense, saw the brave boy's struggles, and prayed with agonizing fervor that he might be successful. But is probable, for they were now midway of the river, that both Dick and the little boy whom he had bravely undertaken to rescue would have been drowned, had not a row-boat been fortunately near. The two men who were in it witnessed the accident, and hastened to the rescue of our hero.

"Keep up a little longer," they shouted, bending to their oars, "and we will save you."

Dick heard the shout, and it put fresh strength into him. He battled manfully with the treacherous sea, his

eyes fixed longingly upon the approaching boat.

"Hold on tight, little boy," he said. "There's a boat coming."

The little boy did not see the boat. His eyes were closed to shut out the fearful water, but he clung the closer to his young preserver. Six long steady strokes, and the boat dashed along side Strong hands seized Dick and his youthful burden, and drew them into the boat, both dripping with water.

"God be thanked!" exclaimed the father, as from the steamer he saw the child's rescue. "That brave boy shall be rewarded, if I sacrifice my whole fortune to compass it."

"You've had a pretty narrow escape, young chap," said one of the boatmen to Dick. "It was a pretty tough job you undertook."

"Yes," said Dick. "That's what I thought when I was in the water. If it hadn't been for you, I don't know what would have 'come of us."

"Anyhow you're a plucky boy, or you wouldn't have dared to jump into the water after this little chap. It was a risky thing to do."

"I'm used to the water," said Dick, modestly. "I didn't stop to think of the danger, but I wasn't going to see that little fellow drown without tryin' to save him."

The father was waiting on the wharf to receive his little boy, with what feeling of gratitude and joy can be easily understood. With a burst of happy tears he clasped him to his arms. Dick was about to withdraw modestly, but the gentleman perceived the movement, and, putting down the child, came forward, and, clasping his hand, said with emotion, "My brave boy, I owe you a debt I can never repay. But for your timely service I should now be plunged into an anguish which I cannot think of without shudder."

Our hero was ready enough to speak on most occasions, but always felt awkward when he was praised.

"It wasn't any trouble," he said, modestly. "I can swim like a top."

"But not many boys would have risked their lives for a stranger," said the gentleman. "But," he added with a sudden thought, as his glance rested on Dick's dripping garments, "both you and my little boy will take cold in wet clothes. Fortunately I have a friend living close at hand, at whose house you will have an opportunity of taking off your clothes, and having them dried."

Dick protested that he never took cold; but Fosdick, who had now joined them, and who, it is needless to say, had been greatly alarmed at Dick's danger, joined in urging compliance with the gentleman's proposal, and in the end our hero had to yield. His new friend secured a hack, the driver of which agreed for extra recompense to receive the dripping boys into his carriage, and they were whirled rapidly to a pleasant house in a side street...

In about an hour the door of his chamber was opened, and a servant appeared, bringing a new and handsome suit of clothes.

"Whose clothes are they?" asked Dick.

"They are yours."

"Mine! Where did they come from?"

"Mr. Rockwell sent out and bought them for you. They are the same size as your wet ones...."

About eleven o'clock the next morning Dick repaired to Mr. Rockwell's counting-room on Pearl Street. He found himself in front of a large and handsome warehouse. The counting-room was on the lower floor. Our hero entered, and found Mr. Rockwell sitting at a desk. No sooner did that gentleman see him than he arose, and, advancing, shook Dick by the hand in the most friendly manner.

"My young friend," he said, "you have done me so great a service that I wish to be of some service to you in return. Tell me about yourself, and what plans or wishes you have formed for the future."

Dick frankly related his past history, and told Mr. Rockwell of his desire to get into a store or counting-room, and of the failure of all his applications thus far. The merchant listened attentively to Dick's statement, and, when he had finished, placed a sheet of paper before him, and, handing him a pen, said, "Will you write your name on this piece of paper?"

Dick wrote, in a free, bold hand, the name Richard Hunter. He had very much improved his penmanship, as has already been mentioned, and now had no cause to be ashamed of it.

Mr. Rockwell surveyed it approvingly.

"How would you like to enter my counting-room as clerk, Richard?" he asked.

Dick was about to say "Bully," when he recollected himself, and answered, "Very much."

"I suppose you know something of arithmetic, do you not?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then you may consider yourself engaged at a salary of ten dollars a week. You may come next Monday morning."

"Ten dollars!" repeated Dick, thinking he must have misunderstood.

"Yes; will that be sufficient?"

"It's more than I can earn," said Dick, honestly.

"Perhaps it is at first," said Mr. Rockwell, smiling; "but I am willing to pay you that. I will besides advance you as fast as your progress will justify it."

Dick was so elated that he hardly restrained himself from some demonstration which would have astonished the merchant; but he exercised self-control, and only said, "I'll try to serve you so faithfully, sir, that you won't repent having taken me into your service...."

Dick left the counting-room, hardly knowing whether he stood on his head or his heels, so overjoyed was he at the sudden change in his fortunes. Ten dollars

a week was to him a fortune, and three times as much as he had expected to obtain at first. Indeed he would have been glad, only the day before, to get a place at three dollars a week. He reflected that with the stock of clothes which he had now on hand, he could save up at least half of it, and even then live better than he had been accustomed to do; so that his little fund in the savings bank, instead of being diminished, would be steadily increasing. Then he was to be advanced if he deserved it. It was indeed a bright prospect for a boy who, only a year before, could neither read nor write, and depended for a night's lodging upon the chance hospitality of an alleyway or old wagon. Dick's great ambition to "grow up 'spectable" seemed likely to be accomplished after all.

"I wish Fosdick was as well off as I am," he thought generously. But he determined to help his less fortunate friend, and assist him up the ladder as he advanced himself....

Although it was yet only noon, Dick did not go out again with his brush. He felt that it was time to retire from business. He would leave his share of the public patronage to other boys less fortunate than himself. That evening Dick and Fosdick had a long conversation. Fosdick rejoiced heartily in his friend's success, and on his side had the pleasant news to communicate that his pay had been advanced to six dollars a week.

"I think we can afford to leave Mott Street now," he continued. "This house isn't as neat as it might be, and I should like to live in a nicer quarter of the city."

"All right," said Dick. "We'll hunt up a new room tomorrow. I shall have plenty of time, having retired from business. I'll try to get my reg'lar customers to take Johnny Nolan in my place. That boy hasn't any enterprise. He needs somebody to look out for him."

"You might give him your box and brush, too, Dick."

"No," said Dick; "I'll give him some new ones, but

mine I want to keep, to remind me of the hard times I've had, when I was an ignorant boot-black, and never expected to be anything better."

"When, in short, you were 'Ragged Dick.' You must drop that name, and think of yourself now as"—

"Richard Hunter, Esq.," said our hero, smiling.

"A young gentleman on the way to fame and fortune," added Fosdick.

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LESSON TWO

THE VIRTUES OF WEALTH

A. Objectives (Two Days)

1. To identify the main components of the competing form of the success ethic that developed in industrial America.

2. To identify people such as Horatio Alger, a Protestant clergyman who preached the virtues of wealth.

3. To examine a rags-to-riches story and evaluate its realistic and unrealistic characteristics.

B. Lesson Activities

1. To help students jump into the lesson, ask them which they think is more important in achieving success: self-help (good character, hard work, perseverance) or opportunity (luck, social conditions). This should serve as a review of yesterday's discussion of Franklin.

2. Introduce students to major proponents of the rags-to-riches myth by reading and briefly discussing **Part II** of the Wyllie essay (**DOCUMENT E**). As you discuss, give them some additional information about Alger and the myth from your **TEACHER'S BACKGROUND** and point out that all of Alger's stories emphasized "luck, pluck, and virtue."

3. Assign one student to make a list on the board while the others suggest examples of luck, pluck, or virtue in the Alger excerpt. (Alternatively, you may wish to do a read-around of this document in class and assign several of the best readers to read the lines of

the characters and a narrator to do the descriptive parts.)

4. Briefly discuss *Ragged Dick*, then have students do a quick- write on the question: In your own life, what roles do you expect self-help and opportunity to play in achieving success? Have a few students read their papers and continue the discussion by asking: How realistic is the rags-to-riches story; are some parts more believable than others?

C. Evaluating the Lesson

1. Check for understanding during readings and discussions.

2. Assess the writing assignment. Are students understanding the difference between Franklin's gradual cultivation of good credit and material success over the years and Dick's sudden transformation on the simple basis of a boy's good character?

STUDENT RESOURCE: DOCUMENT E

"THE MYTH OF RAGS TO RICHES" PART II
(Secondary Source)

One of the most impressive facts about the American cult of self-help is that many of its leading proponents were clergymen. The names of Henry Ward Beecher, Lyman Abbott, William Lawrence, Russell Conwell, and Horatio Alger were as familiar to readers of success tracts as to those who worshipped in the leading Protestant churches on the Sabbath. By teaching that godliness was in league with riches such spokesmen put the sanction of the church on the get-ahead values of the business community....

Of all the popularizers of self-help values none was better known to the post-Civil War generation than Horatio Alger, who got his start as a Unitarian minister at Brewster, Massachusetts, in 1864. Like Matthew H. Smith before him, Alger abandoned both the pulpit and New England for a literary career in New York. He found his inspirations in the city, as did others who played upon the rags-to-riches theme. Unlike Smith, who reported the doings of Wall Street operators, Alger concentrated on boys who had not yet arrived. He invested his heroes with all the moral virtues honored by the cult of self-help, but even in this he was different, in that Ragged Dick and Tattered Tom won success by some sudden stroke, rather than by steady application to business [alone]. These features, together with his preference for the fictional form, set Alger apart from other leading writers in this field.

Even without Alger the success-minded clergy...[were] of great influence in the cult of self-help. They wrote many of the books of its bible, preached its gospel, tried to restrain its excesses, and protected it against the charge of godlessness and materialism. In nineteenth-century America, where the mass of men respected business and religion, the partnership organized by the clergy proved profitable to both.

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LESSON THREE

THE GOSPEL OF WEALTH

A. Objectives (Three Days)

1. To identify further the promoters of the gospel of wealth.

2. To examine their methods of appealing to ordinary people.

3. To analyze the values implied in an ideology that exalts wealth and the wealthy.

B. Lesson Activities

1. Involve the class by putting them in the role of the audience eagerly waiting for the fiery Reverend Russell Conwell and his famous speech, "Acres of Diamonds" (**DOCUMENT F**). One student, who has prepared ahead of time, gives a dramatic reading of the excerpts from the speech. Several other students, who were also given their assignments ahead of time, follow the speech with clarifying statements. One plays a journalist who asks questions of those playing selected members of the audience, such as the following:

   a. What do you think Rev. Conwell meant when he said, "You have no right to be poor?"

   b. Doesn't money corrupt people, tempt them to do evil?

   c. From your appearance, sir/madam, you appear to be well-to-do. How do you feel about the speech?

   d. As a working man, brother, do you and your

employer stand arm in arm for the common good of humanity?

Do a read-around of **Part III** of Wyllie's essay (**DOCUMENT G**), then allow questions and class discussion. Focus on the clergy's role in justifying the development of big business and the concentration of great wealth in a few hands. Why are some people poor according to Conwell? (30 mins.)

2. Have a student who has prepared in advance read aloud P. T. Barnum's "The Art of Money-Getting" (**DOCUMENT H**). Continue with the same format as in the first lesson activity, with journalists asking appropriate questions of members of the audience. Whereas Conwell aims his speech at one level of society, who is Barnum addressing? (Isn't he advising the rich about how to stay that way?)

3. As a follow-up to Barnum, distribute Thorstein Veblen's comments on the difference between social classes and have a student read them aloud (**DOCUMENT I**). (Students should see that if these differences are as culturally imbedded as Veblen suggests, Barnum is only imagining that anyone has a chance to gain entry into the leisure class.)

4. Have a student who has prepared in advance for the role deliver a dramatic reading of excerpts from Carnegie's *Gospel of Wealth* (**DOCUMENT J**). Afterward, a journalist asks him clarifying questions:

   a. Just where is the law of competition written?

   b. If we accommodate ourselves to great inequality, where does that leave the idea of America as a land of opportunity?

c. You say the rich man or woman has a duty to live modestly to set an example—but what about your mansion on Fifth Avenue?

d. What gives you the special right to decide how to spend the accumulated wealth of the community? For example, why not just pay your workers higher wages and let them decide for themselves how to spend the money?

e. Even if you do give large sums toward the needs of the community, won't most rich people keep most of their money? You think the state should heavily tax the inheritances of the rich, but don't most rich people hate that idea and support only those politicians who promise to keep taxes low?

5. Have a student present a dramatic reading of the excerpts from Henry George's *Poverty and Progress* (**DOCUMENT K**). Like Carnegie, George admires the productive power unleashed in "this marvelous era," but he is not hopeful about the good intentions of a few men like Carnegie. Industrial society means grinding poverty for those trapped in cities and dependent upon the business cycle that can throw them out of work at any time. Should they wait for Carnegie's wealth to trickle down through philanthropic institutions to help them? (Carnegie opposed giving to charity.)

6. Stage a session of "meet the press" that focuses on the role of social philosophers and businessmen in justifying the development of big business and the concentration of wealth. Have students research in encyclopedias and play the roles of:

a. ***Herbert Spencer,*** who developed the concept of Social Darwinism and argued that competition in

society should be absolute, that neither government nor any other agency should intercede on behalf of the weak or disadvantaged in the so-called "struggle for existence."

b. ***John Pierpont Morgan,*** a Spencerian captain of industry who abides by an ideal of concentrating wealth and power at the top of society.

c. ***Pat O'Malley,*** an immigrant who, despite hard work and virtuous character, fails to get his/her family out of a poor neighborhood and into a nice house and good school.

d. ***Henry George,*** a reformer who strives to improve the condition of the working people like O'Malley and advocates more government responsibility for addressing social inequities.

e. ***Andrew Carnegie,*** a very unusual rich man who seems to believe in the Spencerian tooth-and-nail struggle and yet contributes to foundations to improve social conditions.

f. ***A moderator,*** who encourages debate, playing devil's advocate if necessary.

6. Have students do a quick-write that identifies the promoters of the gospel of wealth and the rags-to-riches myth and why they promoted these ideas or ideology.

7. Have students present a dramatic reading of the excerpt from Nathanael West's story, *A Cool Million,* that satirizes the Horatio Alger theme (**DOCUMENT L**). A discussion of this story should help students to understand why it is a myth that anyone can rise

from rags to riches if only one is a good boy or girl and watches out for the main chance.

C. Extended Activities

1. Divide the class into three teams, each assigned to do further research on the benefits and problems of the success ethic during three periods: the rise of big business; the 1950's; the present. The teams will then present the results of their work to the whole class.

2. Following the presentations in #C.1 above, have students write a forced-choice paragraph for each of the periods, giving their conclusions about whether the success ethic was/is a greater overall benefit or cost to society.

C. Evaluating the Lesson

1. Check for understanding during discussion. Assess preparation of debaters and actors and the understanding of questioners from the audience. Assess writing assignments.

2. Give students instructions for an essay to be written in class the next day, in which they synthesize what they have learned about the development of the success ethic in the United States. The specific question should be stated in a way that reflects the ability level of the class. Give them a copy of the question in advance. Remind students that one way to conquer the abstract nature of the question is to use examples from literature and biography that they have discussed.

3. Have students write the essay that was assigned the previous day.

STUDENT RESOURCE: DOCUMENT F

DOCTOR RUSSELL H. CONWELL, "ACRES OF DIAMONDS"
(Primary Source)

Minister of Baptist Temple and founder of Temple University in Philadelphia, Conwell delivered this, his most famous speech, upon thousands of occasions in the 1890's. This is one of many versions. The title refers to a long fable omitted here, about a man who departed for distant lands to search for wealth while the man who bought his house unearthed acres of diamonds in the basement.

> ***The "Acres of Diamonds" which I have mentioned through so many years are to [be] found in this city, and you are to find them. Many have found them. And what man has done, man can do....***
>
> ***I say you ought to be rich; you have no right to be poor. To live in Philadelphia and not be rich is a misfortune, and it is doubly a misfortune, because you could have been rich just as well as be poor. Philadelphia furnishes so many opportunities. You ought to be rich. But persons with certain religious prejudice will ask, "How can you spend your time advising the rising generation to give their time to getting money—dollars and cents—the commercial spirit?"***
>
> ***Yet I must say that you ought to spend time getting rich. You and I know there are some things more valuable than money; of course, we do. Ah, yes! By a heart made unspeakably sad by a grave on which the autumn leaves now fall, I know there are some things higher and grander and sublimer than money. Well does the man know, who has suffered, that there are some things sweeter and holier and more sacred than gold. Nevertheless, the man of common sense also knows that there is not any one of those things that is not greatly enhanced by the use of money. Money is power. Love is the grandest thing on God's earth, but fortunate the lover who has plenty of money....***
>
> ***We get a prejudice against rich men because of the lies that are told about them. The lies that are told about Mr. Rockefeller because he has two hundred million dollars—so many believe them; yet how false is the representation of that man to the world. How little we can tell what is true nowadays when newspapers try to sell their papers entirely on***

some sensation! The way they lie about the rich men is something terrible...

...and you know it is a lie; and yet that is the kind of speech that they are all the time hearing, representing the capitalists as wicked and the laboring men so enslaved. Why, how wrong it is! Let the man who loves his flag and believes in American principles endeavor with all his soul to bring the capitalist and the laboring man together until they stand side by side, and arm in arm, and work for the common good of humanity.

He is an enemy to his country who sets capital against labor or labor against capital....

Adapted from Russell H. Conwell and His Work: One Man's Interpretation of Life by Agnes Rush Burr. Philadelphia: The John C. Winston Co., 1926.

STUDENT RESOURCE: DOCUMENT G

"THE MYTH OF RAGS TO RICHES," PART III
(Secondary Source)

According to the theology of success God always rewarded the industrious, the frugal, and the sober with wealth.

In accounting for the superior prosperity of the well-to-do, clergymen invariably pointed to their superior morality. Russell Conwell insisted that ninety-eight out of every hundred rich Americans stood above their fellowmen in honesty. "That is why they are rich," he said. "That is why they are trusted with money. That is why they carry on great enterprises and find plenty of people to work with them. It is because they are honest men...."

Turned around, this doctrine meant that wickedness was in league with poverty....The man who complained against God's wise way of distributing wealth had the root of evil in him. "And is the young man aware, when repining [complaining] at his penury [poverty], that he is reproaching his Maker, and charging Him indirectly with being stingy?" another clergyman asked....

In return for the sanction of religion, businessmen were supposed to be sincerely religious, identifying themselves with the doctrines and activities of the church.

The application of these religious sanctions, however, was by no means automatic. Clergymen who identified themselves with the success cult did not hesitate to pass moral judgment on men and methods in business. Like other authorities on self-help they did not attempt to glorify notorious men like Jay Gould, Jim Fisk, or Daniel Drew, for they generally held that "No amount of money can make a highway robber or any other kind successful....Even millions of plunder does not constitute success, which must include a good name...."

The man who coveted wealth for its own sake was a mere beast of burden, who would go "toiling beneath his load with gold on his back, and hell in his heart, down to destruction...." "The man that worships the dollar instead of thinking of the purposes for which it ought to be used, the man who idolizes simply money, the miser that hordes his money in the cellar, or hides it in his stocking, or refuses to invest it where it will do the world good, that man who hugs the dollar until the eagle squeals," Russell Conwell warned, "has in him the root of all evil...."

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STUDENT RESOURCE: DOCUMENT H

"THE ART OF MONEY-GETTING"
(Primary source)

In the United States, where we have more land than people, it is not at all difficult for persons in good health to make money. In this comparatively new field there are so many avenues of success open, so many vocations which are not crowded, that any person of either sex who is willing, at least for the time being, to engage in any respectable occupation that offers, may find lucrative employment.

Those who really desire to attain an independence, have only to set their minds upon it, and adopt the proper means, as they do in regard to any other object which they wish to accomplish, and the thing is easily done. But however easy it may be found to make money, I have no doubt many of my hearers will agree it is the most difficult thing in the world to keep it. The road to wealth is, as Dr. Franklin truly says, "as plain as the road to mill." It consists in expending less than we earn; that seems to be a very simple problem....

...You will find, as a general thing, that the poor boys get rich and the rich boys get poor. For instance, a rich man at his decease, leaves a large estate to his family. His eldest sons, who have helped him earn his fortune, know by experience the value of money, and they take their inheritance and add to it. The separate portions of the young children are placed at interest, and the little fellows are patted on the head, and told a dozen times a day, "You are rich; you will never have to work, you can always have whatever you wish, for you were born with a golden spoon in your mouth." The young heir soon finds out what that means; he has the finest dresses and playthings; he is crammed with sugar candies and almost "killed with kindness," and he passes from school to school, petted and flattered. He becomes arrogant and self-conceited, abuses his teachers, and carries everything with a high hand. He knows nothing of the real value of money, having never earned any; but he knows all about the "golden spoon" business. At college, he invites his poor fellow-students to his room where he "wines and dines" them. He is cajoled and caressed, and called a glorious good fellow, because he is so lavish of his money. He gives his game suppers, drives his fast horses, invites his chums to fetes and parties, determined to have lots of "good times." He spends the night in frolics and debauchery, and leads off his companions with the familiar song, "We won't go home till morning." He gets them to join him in pulling down signs, taking gates from their hinges and

throwing them into back yards and horse-ponds. If the police arrest them, he knocks them down, is taken to the lock-up, and joyfully foots the bills.

"Ah! my boys," he cries, "what is the use of being rich, if you can't enjoy yourself?"

He might more truly say, "if you can't make a fool of yourself"; but he is "fast," hates slow things, and don't [sic] "see it." Young men loaded down with other people's money are almost sure to lose all they inherit, and they acquire all sorts of bad habits which, in the majority of cases, ruin them in health, purse, and character. In this country, one generation follows another, and the poor of to-day are rich in the next generation, or the third. Their experience leads them on, and they become rich, and they leave vast riches to their young children. These children, having been reared in luxury, are inexperienced and get poor; and after long experience another generation comes on and gathers up riches again in turn. And thus "history repeats itself," and happy is he who by listening to the experience of others avoids the rocks and shoals on which so many have been wrecked.

LEARN SOMETHING USEFUL.—*Every man should make his son or daughter learn some trade or profession, so that in these days of changing fortunes—of being rich to-day and poor to-morrow—they may have something tangible to fall back upon. This provision might save many persons from misery, who by some unexpected turn of fortune have lost all their means....*

Excerpted from "The Art of Money Getting," by P.T. Barnum, 1854. Photo courtesy of The Bettmann Archives

P. T. Barnum

STUDENT RESOURCE: DOCUMENT I

"THE THEORY OF THE LEISURE CLASS"
(Primary Source)

***THE INSTITUTION** of a leisure class is found in its best development at the higher stages of the barbarian culture; as, for instance, in feudal Europe or feudal Japan. In such communities the distinction between classes is very rigorously observed; and the feature of most striking economic significance in these class differences is the distinction maintained between the employments proper to the several classes....*

Manual labor, industry, whatever has to do directly with the everyday work of getting a livelihood, is the exclusive occupation of the inferior class. This inferior class includes slaves and other dependents, and ordinarily also all the women. If there are several grades of aristocracy, the women of high rank are commonly exempt from industrial employment, or at least from the more vulgar kinds of manual labor. The men of the upper classes are not only exempt, but by prescriptive custom they are debarred, from all industrial occupations. The range of employments open to them is rigidly defined. As on the higher plane already spoken of, these employments are government, warfare, religious observances, and sports. These four lines of activity govern the scheme of life of the upper classes, and for the highest rank—the kings or chieftains—these are the only kinds of activity that custom or the common sense of the community will allow. Indeed, where the scheme is well developed even sports are accounted doubtfully legitimate for the members of the highest rank. To the lower grades of the leisure class certain other employments are open, but they are employments that are subsidiary to one or another of these typical leisure-class occupations. Such are, for instance, the manufacture and care of arms and accoutrements and of war canoes, the dressing and handling of horses, dogs, and hawks, the preparation of sacred apparatus, etc. The lower classes are excluded from these secondary honorable employments, except from such as are plainly of an industrial character and are only remotely related to the typical leisure-class occupations....

A distinction is still habitually made between industrial and non-industrial occupations; and this modern distinction is a transmuted form of the barbarian distinction between exploit and drudgery. Such employments as warfare, politics, public worship, and public merrymaking are felt, in the popular ap-

prehension, to differ intrinsically from the labor that has to do with elaborating the material means of life. The precise line of demarcation is not the same as it was in the early barbarian scheme, but the broad distinction has not fallen into disuse.

From *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, by Thorstein Veblen, 1899.

STUDENT RESOURCE: DOCUMENT J

EXCERPT FROM ANDREW CARNEGIE'S *THE GOSPEL OF WEALTH*
(Primary Source)

THE PROBLEM OF THE ADMINISTRATION OF WEALTH

The problem of our age is the proper administration of wealth, that the ties of brotherhood may still bind together the rich and poor in harmonious relationship. The conditions of human life have not only been changed, but revolutionized, within the past few hundred years. In former days there was little difference between the dwelling, dress, food, and environment of the chief and those of his retainers. The Indians are to-day where civilized man then was. When visiting the Sioux, I was led to the wigwam of the chief. It was like the others in external appearance, and even within the difference was trifling between it and those of the poorest of his braves. The contrast between the palace of the millionaire and the cottage of the laborer with us to-day measures the change which has come with civilization. This change, however, is not to be deplored, but welcomed as highly beneficial. It is well, nay, essential, for the progress of the race that the houses of some should be homes for all that is highest and best in literature and the arts, and for all the refinements of civilization, rather than that none should be so.

The price which society pays for the law of competition, like the price it pays for cheap comforts and luxuries, is also great; but the advantages of this law are also greater still than its cost - for it is to this law that we owe our wonderful material development, which brings improved conditions in its train. But, whether the law be benign or not, we must say of it, as we say of the change in the conditions of men to which we have referred: It is here; we cannot evade it; no substitutes for it have been found; and while the law may be sometimes hard for the individual, it is best for the race, because it insures the survival of the fittest in every department. We accept and welcome, therefore, as conditions to which we must accommodate ourselves, great inequality of environment; the concentration of business, industrial and commercial, in the hands of a few; and the law of competition between these, as being not only beneficial, but essential to the future progress of the race.

STUDENT RESOURCE: DOCUMENT J

The growing disposition to tax more and more heavily large estates left at death is a cheering indication of the growth of a salutary change in public opinion. The State of Pennsylvania now takes - subject to some exceptions one tenth of the property left by its citizens. Of all forms of taxation this seems the wisest. Men who continue hoarding great sums all their lives, the proper use of which for public ends would work good to the community from which it chiefly came, should be made to feel that the community, in the form of the State, cannot thus be deprived of its proper share. By taxing estates heavily at death the State marks its condemnation of the selfish millionaire's unworthy life.

It is desirable that nations should go much further in this direction. Indeed, it is difficult to set bounds to the share of a rich man's estate which should go at his death to the public through the agency of the State, and by all means such taxes should be graduated, beginning at nothing upon moderate sums to dependents, and increasing rapidly as the amounts swell, until of the millionaire's hoard, as of Shylock's, at least

The other half
Comes to the privy coffer of the State.

This policy would work powerfully to induce the rich man to attend to the administration of wealth during his life, which is the end that society should always have in view, as being by far the most fruitful for the people. Nor need it be feared that this policy would sap the root of enterprise and render men less anxious to accumulate, for, to the class whose ambition it is to leave great fortunes and to be talked about after their death, it will attract even more attention, and, indeed, be a somewhat nobler ambition, to have enormous sums paid over to the State from their fortunes.

This, then, is held to be the duty of the man of wealth: To set an example of modest, unostentatious living, shunning display or extravagance; to provide moderately for the legitimate wants of those dependent upon him; and, after doing so, to consider all surplus revenues which come to him simply as trust funds, which he is called upon to administer, and strictly bound as a matter of duty to administer in the manner which, in his judgment, is best calculated to produce the most beneficial results for the community—the man of wealth thus becoming the mere

trustee and agent for his poorer brethren, bringing to their service his superior wisdom, experience, and ability to administer, doing for them better than they would or could do for themselves.

Published originally in the *North American Review*, CXLVIII (June 1889), 653-654, and CXLIX (December 1889), 682-698. Carnegie did not devise the appropriate and fetching title this essay now bears. He called it "Wealth." William T. Stead, editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, supplied the heading "The Gospel of Wealth."

STUDENT RESOURCE: DOCUMENT K

EXCERPT FROM *"PROGRESS AND POVERTY: AN INQUIRY INTO THE CAUSE OF INDUSTRIAL DEPRESSIONS AND OF INCREASE OF WANT WITH INCREASE OF WEALTH...THE REMEDY"*

(Primary Source)

At the beginning of this marvelous era it was natural to expect, and it was expected, that laborsaving inventions would lighten the toil and improve the condition of the laborer; that the enormous increase in the power of producing wealth would make real poverty a thing of the past. Could a man of the last century—a Franklin or a Priestly—have seen, in a vision of the future, the steamship taking the place of the sailing vessel, the railroad train of the wagon, the reaping machine of the scythe, the threshing machine of the flail; could he have heard the throb of the engines that in obedience to human will, and for the satisfaction of human desire, exert a power greater than that of all the men and all the beasts of burden of the earth combined; could he have seen the forest tree transformed into finished lumber—into doors, sashes, blinds, boxes or barrels, with hardly the touch of a human hand; the great workshops where boots and shoes are turned out by the case with less labor than the old-fashioned cobbler could have put on a sole; the factories where, under the eye of a girl, cotton becomes cloth faster than hundreds of stalwart weavers could have turned it out with their hand looms;...

Now, however, we are coming into collision with facts which ther can be no mistaking. From all parts of the civilized world come complaints of industrial depression; of labor condemned to involuntary idleness; of capital massed and wasting; of pecuniary distress among businessmen; of want and suffering and anxiety among the working classes. All the dull, deadening pain, all the keen, maddening anguish, that to great masses of men are involved in the words "hard times," afflict the world today....

Where the conditions to which material progress everywhere tends are most fully realized—that is to say, where population is densest, wealth greatest, and the machinery of production and exchange most highly developed—we find the deepest poverty, the sharpest struggle for existence, and the most of enforced idleness....

It is true that wealth has been greatly increased, and that the average of comfort,

STUDENT RESOURCE: DOCUMENT K

leisure, and refinement has been raised; but these gains are not general. In them the lowest class do not share....

In the United States it is clear that squalor and misery, and the vices and crimes that spring from them, everywhere increase as the village grows to the city, and the march of development brings the advantages of the improved methods of production and exchange. It is in the older and richer sections of the Union that pauperism and distress among the working classes are becoming most painfully apparent....

This association of poverty with progress is the great enigma of our times. It is the central fact from which spring industrial, social, and political difficulties that perplex the world, and with which statesmanship and philanthropy and education grapple in vain....

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STUDENT RESOURCE: DOCUMENT L

A COOL MILLION OR, *THE DISMANTLING OF LEMUEL PITKIN*
BY NATHANAEL WEST
(Novel)

At the beginning of Nathanael West's novel *A Cool Million*, Lemuel bravely goes off to the big city—New York—to earn money to pay the mortgage on his widowed mother's little house in Vermont before the bank forecloses on it. "Our hero, though only seventeen, [is] a strong, spirited lad," honest, and not afraid of hard work. Both mother and son believe in the success ethic and are convinced that such a fine young man will readily make his fortune and save the family home.

> ...Lem walked west to Central Park, where he sat down on a bench...near the bridle path to watch the society people ride by on their beautiful horses. His attention was particularly attracted by a man driving a small spring wagon, underneath which ran two fine Dalmatians or coach dogs, as they are sometimes called....
>
> The country-bred boy soon noticed that [the man] was not much of a horseman....The off horse, which was very skittish, took fright at a passing policeman and bolted. His panic soon spread to the other horse and the wagon went careening down the path wreaking havoc at every bound....
>
> But suddenly Lem's smile disappeared and his jaw became set, for he saw that a catastrophe was bound to occur unless something was immediately done to halt the maddened thoroughbreds.
>
> The reason for the sudden disappearance of the smile from our hero's face is easily explained. He had spied an old gentleman and his beautiful young daughter about to cross the bridle path, and saw that in a few more seconds they would be trampled under the iron hooves of the flying beasts.
>
> Lem hesitated only long enough to take a firm [grip] on his store teeth, then dashed into the path of the horses. With great strength and agility, he grasped their

bridles and dragged thenm to a rearing halt, a few feet from the astounded and thoroughly frightened pair.

"That lad has saved your lives," said a bystander to the old gentleman, who was none other than Mr. Levi Underdown, president of the Underdown National Bank and Trust Company.

Unfortunately, however, Mr. Underdown was slightly deaf, and, although exceedingly kind, as his many large charities showed, he was very short tempered. He entirely misunderstood the nature of our hero's efforts and thought that the poor boy was a careless groom who had let his [horses] get out of hand. He became extremely angry.

"I've a mind to have you [arrested], young man," said the banker, shaking his umbrella at our hero.

"Oh don't father!" interfered his daughter Alice, who also misunderstood the incident. "Don't have him arrested. He was probably paying court to some pretty nursemaid and forgot about his horses." From this we can readily see that the young lady was of a romantic turn of mind.

She smiled kindly at our hero, and led her irate parent from the scene.

Lem had been unable to utter one word in explanation because, during this tussle with the horses, his teeth had jarred loose and without them he was afraid to speak. All he could do was to gaze after their departing backs with...anguish.

There being nothing else [left to do], Lem...turned to search for his oral equipment in the mud of the bridle path. While he was thus occupied, a man representing the insurance company with which Mr. Goldstein carried a...policy approached him.

"Here is ten dollars, my lad," said the claim adjuster. "The gentleman whose horses you so bravely stopped wishes you to have this money as a reward."

Lem took it without thinking.

"Please sign this for me," added the insurance man, holding out a legal form which released his company from any and all claim to damages.

One of Lem's eyes had been so badly injured by a flying stone that he could not see out of it, but nevertheless he refused to sign.

The claim adjuster [decided to use a trick]. "I am an autograph collector," he said slyly. "Unfortunately, I have not my album with me, but if you will be so kind as to sign this piece of paper which I happened to have in my pocket, you will make me very happy...."

Befuddled by the pain in his injured eye, Lem signed in order to be rid of the...fellow, then bent again to the task of finding his store teeth. He finally discovered them deep in the mud of the bridle path. After carefully prying the set loose, he went to a public drinking fountain for the dual purpose of bathing both it and his hurt eye.

While he busied himself at the fountain, a young man approached...."Excuse me,...but I witnessed your heroic act and I wish to take the liberty of congratulating you. In these [corrupt] times, it is rare indeed for one to witness a hero in action."

Lem was embarrassed. He hurriedly replaced his teeth and thanked the stranger for his praise. He continued, however, to bathe his wounded eye, which was still giving him considerable pain.

"Let me introduce myself," the young man continued. "I am Sylvanus Snodgrasse, a poet... I intend to write an ode about the deed performed by you this day. You do not perhaps appreciate, having a true hero's modesty, the significance...of your performance. Poor Boy, Flying Team, Banker's Daugher...it's in the real American tradition."....

Snodgrasse kept talking, and soon a crowd of curious people gathered around him and poor Lemuel. The "poet" no longer addressed our hero, but the crowd in

general.

"Gentlemen...there have been heroes before him—Leonidas, Maxiumus, Wolfe Tone, Deaf Smith, to mention only a few—but this should not prevent us from hailing L. Pitkin as the hero, if not of our time, at least of the immediate past."....

Although Sylvanus Snodgrasse kept on in this vein for quite some time, I will stop reporting his oration to acquaint you with his real purpose. As you have probably surmised, it was not so innocent as it seemed. The truth is that while he kept the crowd amused, his [companions] circulated freely among its members and picked their pockets.

They had succeeded in robbing the whole crowd, including our hero, when a policeman made his appearance. Snodgrasse immediately discontinued his address and hurried off after his henchmen.

The officer dispersed the gathering and everyone moved away except Lem, who was lying on the ground in a dead faint. The bluecoat, thinking that the poor boy was drunk, kicked him a few times, but when several hard blows in the groin failed to budge him, he decided to call an ambulance.

One wintry morning several weeks after the incident in the park, Lem was dismissed from the hospital minus his right eye. It had been so severly damaged that the physician had thought best to remove it.

He had no money, for as we have recounted, Snodgrasse's henchmen had robbed him. Even the [false] teeth...were gone. They had been taken from him by the hospital authorities, who claimed that they did not fit properly and were therefore a menace to his health....

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BIOGRAPHIES

Biographic information on people mentioned in this unit.

Alger, Horatio, Jr. (1832-1899) was the son of a Unitarian minister. He had a classical education at Harvard and became a minister, but he was fired by his congregation in 1866. He moved to New York City and became a sensational success as a writer.

Barnum, Phineas T. (1810-1891) was born in a modest Connecticut home, where he supported his family after his father's death. As a newspaper editor he was repeatedly arrested for libel, so he moved to New York City in 1834, began a career as a showman exhibiting a black woman advertised as the 161-year-old nurse to George Washington, and opened the American Museum in 1842, where 82,000,000 visitors viewed his supposed freaks of nature over the next 26 years. Calling himself the "Prince of Humbugs," he promoted America's largest circus beginning in the 1870's.

Carnegie, Andrew (1835-1919) was the son of a poor Scotsman who settled in Pittsburgh in 1848. Andrew became a factory worker at first, but he was a railroad executive by the 1850's, and founded Keystone Steel Bridge Company in 1873, which grew into the consolidated trust eventually incorporated into U. S. Steel in 1901. He contributed over $300 million to public libraries, institutes, foundations, and universities.

Conwell, Russell (1843-1925) was the son of a Massachusetts farmer. He studied law at Yale, served in the Civil War, became an attorney in 1865, a Baptist minister in 1879, a founder of hospitals and a university. He earned $8 million in royalties on books and lectures.

Franklin, Benjamin (1706-1790) was the son of a tallow-chandler. He dropped out of school and apprenticed to

become a printer at the age of 12. He went on to become one of the leading Americans of the eighteenth century: a writer, publisher, inventor, scientist, diplomat, and statesman.

George, Henry (1839-1897) was born in a modest Philadelphia home, left school at the age of 13 to be a clerk, went to sea at 16, and became a newspaper man in San Francisco at the age of 19. He removed to New York and nearly won the mayoral election of 1886 on the basis of his reputation from Progress and Poverty.

Morgan, J. Pierpont (1837-1913) was the son of a financier. He headed the firm that became the leading source of United States government financing, gained control of a large portion of the country's railroad companies, and financed industrial consolidations like U. S. Steel. He was also an art collector and museum benefactor.

Spencer, Herbert (1820-1903) was born into an English schoolmaster's family and became a schoolmaster himself. Subsequently he gained fame as a writer of what he called "synthetic philosophy and for his theories of social Darwinism."

Veblen, Thorstein (1857-1929) was born on a Wisconsin farm and received his Ph.D. from Yale in 1884. He married into a wealthy family, became an instructor at the University of Chicago, and wrote many books based on a utilitarian philosophy and the conviction that making goods (industry) and making money (finance) were basically incompatible processes. His best known work is *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (1899).

West, Nathanael (1903-1940) was born Nathan Weinstein, in New York City to a middle-class Jewish immigrant family. He graduated from Brown University and be-

came a hotel manager to support himself while writing, which brought him little success before he was killed with his wife in an automobile accident in California. His works dwelt on the grotesqueness underlying the American Dream. They include *Miss Lonelyhearts* (1933), *A Cool Million* (1934) and *The Day of the Locust* (1939).

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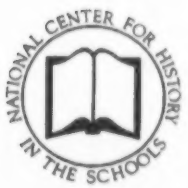
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